



# DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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### GERMAN WHALE UTILIZATION HALTED BY WAR

Germany's efforts to develop a new industry for utilizing the parts of whales, especially glands not used for oil, were terminated, temporarily at least, by the outbreak of war in Europe, according to an article appearing in this month's issue of the Fishery Market News, published by the Division of Fishery Industries, Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior.

A report of these efforts has been submitted to the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce by the American Consul in Frankfort-on-Main, Germany.

"Germany's interest in the maximum economic utilization of whale materials," says the report, "has been stimulated in recent years by the development of a new and modern whaling fleet, coupled with the nation's heavy dependence upon foreign sources for valuable animal products such as edible oils, medicinal glands, etc., which are consumed upon a very large scale in Germany. The utilization of whale materials was also considered as nationally important as offering possibilities for developing a lucrative export trade in derivative medicinal and other products.

"In 1938-39, the German Antarctic whaling fleet comprised seven factory or cooking ships and 56 catcher or 'killer boats,' compared with six factory and 44 catching vessels used in the 1937-38 season. The fleet brought back to Germany

83,286 metric tons of oil in 1938-39 compared with 91,609 tons in 1937-38. The smaller tonnage obtained in the more recent year was attributed to adverse factors such as less favorable weather conditions, shortening of the catching season by international agreement, and possible diminution of whales due to overcatching in preceding years.

"In addition to the whale oil supplied by its own vessels, Germany imported during the 1937-38 season 245,490 metric tons of this product and during the first seven months of the 1938-39 season, 123,052 metric tons. This oil has been in heavy demand especially for the manufacture of margarine.

"German scientists have been intensively engaged in the problems of more effective and economic utilization of all parts of the whale, giving especial attention to the utilization of whale organs, livers, pancreatic glands, etc. It is considered that upon the return of normal peace conditions an important industry can be developed for producing medicinal preparations, hormones, vitamins, etc., by the utilization of whale organs. This new industry is considered to offer attractive possibilities, due especially to the immense size of the whale compared with ordinary slaughter-house animals and fish. A whale liver weighs between 900 and 1,500 pounds while the whale pancreatic gland weighs around 45 pounds, and other glands useful for medicinal preparations are of correspondingly large size. Whale livers possess a relatively high content of vitamin A. A liver weighing 1,320 pounds contains about 1,800 million international units of vitamin A, a quantity equivalent to that contained in 6,600 pounds of cod-liver oil or 13,200 pounds of cod livers."

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